BEFORE WATCHMEN
ATOMEKA
BOOM! GENERATION
BLEEDING COOL
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BLEEDINGCOOL.COM MAGAZINE
VALIANT RETURNS
WALKING DEAD PRICE GUIDE | SHIFTYLOOK
THE MASSIVE | CROSSED | SUMMER MOVIES

BCM #0 Introduction by Rich Johnston

Welcome to an experiment. While everyone else is madly rushing to go from print to digital, we're going from digital to print, baby. This is a comic book website in paper form. Downloaded onto reconstituted wood. Pages that can be turned. No crashing, no waiting for visuals and definitely no pop ups or auto-playing videos. No people shouting "First!" after I've written something. And also no DRM whatsoever. If the publisher goes bust (and hey, by publishing this magazine that risk has increased exponentially), you still get to access your back issues whenever you want. Print, it's the future. Hell, you can even get me to sign it, and that's just not something you're going to want me to do to the back of your iPad.

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LIFE IN THE GUTTERS

By Rich Johnston

There's nothing a comic book professional likes to do in a New York sports bar more than gossip. About editors, publishers, writers, pencillers and artists. And when they've finished, come home and tweet about how much they hate comic book gossip. Then send me an e-mail.

That's basically how I've survived as a gossip columnist in this industry. Some of my biggest detractors have also been some of my biggest sources. And living in London, England, a fair few Americans seem to feel freer to tell me the goss, safe in the knowledge that they won't be seen telling me things they shouldn't. This means, to some degree, I'm protected. Sure, I've had a death threat here, a pummelling on the floor of New York Comic Con there, but it's a rarity. And he didn't have much of a reach anyway.

Some people act as if the very fact that the comics industry has a gossip columnist (and has had one for twenty years now) is an affront. Me, I choose to see it as a recognition that comics are as valid a form of entertainment as any other. Film, TV, stage, music, politics, economics, they all have their own gossip columnists. It helps the spread of industry information beyond the PR gated communities, and by printing it, lets the fans into what the pros are already talking about. I think it's only fitting that comics do, too. That's always been my motivation; the difference now is that I'm paid for it.

Of course, because it's a rather insular industry, and there's far less money in it, egos can get even more bruised than usual. This is why I often have to leave the names off to protect the guilty.

ITEM: DC's New 52 will be celebrating its first year with Zero issues in September – though no one's allowed to talk about it yet. And although plans for it began a year before publication, some writers and artist were only appointed the week before it was announced...

ITEM: Watch for "title creep" at Marvel. I'm told that when certain people in the company have been promoted, others have been known to get their own title changed so it sounds better in comparison. "Sounds" being the operative word.

ITEM: *The Walking Dead* is the hot new book – and the hot new court case, as Tony Moore has launched a legal action over the ownership and payoff deal. Does anyone else find it odd that the first three issues of the comic were solicited by Image as having a shared copyright between Tony and Robert Kirkman – but on publication, the indicia in the comic only attributed copyright to Kirkman?

ITEM: Marvel has a policy of not having sofas in their office, so that staff members cannot have sex on them after hours. The executive in question who made that decision claims he has saved a number of marriages with this policy.

ITEM: Some people claim that the Kickstarter model is one scandal away from self-destructing. Which creator will take the $100K intended to publish a graphic novel, but snort it up their nose instead? Some say it's already happened...

ITEM: Stan Lee once appeared at a British convention with a rather young lady on his arm. The British gossipy pros were convinced this woman had been hired by Stan for the evening. The truth was far less salacious – Stan's wife is from England, and the young lady actually was a relative. Sometimes people have to take their minds *out* of the gutter.

Take the rumours that a comic book executive is considered by some to be an actual war criminal. Or the comparison of one publisher and its executives to the offices of Mad Men, the most unlikeliest of individuals cast as Donald Draper, sexing their way through menial staffers before featuring them as comic characters as a sort of memento. Or one executive adept at trading premium variant covers comics for thousands of dollars of class-A narcotics - which also allowed the drug dealer in question to make far more money and launder his ill gotten gains. Or what was dubbed the Adultery Cruise by the employees of one publisher, in which multiple executives holidayed together with their new partners – who used to be wives of their freelancers. Or the comics executive with a hidden past at another company embezzling enough to buy a house – which the current employer has no idea about.

But there can be consequences. A comic book writer who engaged in public fisticuffs can suddenly find his high profile book taken off him. An executive who tries to make out with one of his freelancer's partners in public can find himself demoted. And no publisher can get away with threatening to strangle another executive because he's gay any more. But people are people. They aim to misbehave.

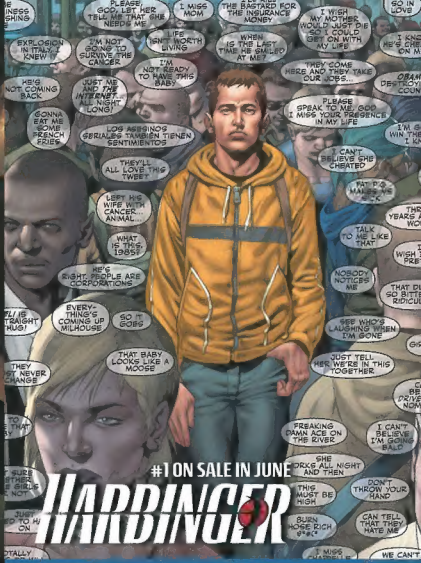
Companies seek to control the flow of information through their public relations wings. But for every hole they manage to stop up, two more start leaking. And the more you press down on the leaky bottle, the more it spurts.

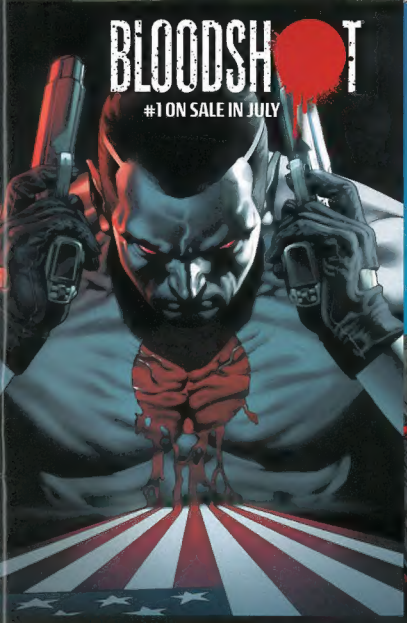
And that's why Bleeding Cool exists. To give the comic book fan, the same insight to the comics industry that the professional gets. For some, it may be like seeing how a sausage is made, but most of us are geeky enough that we love to know more about the gristle, the earlobes, the pig foreskin and the trotters that get mixed up in there with the sawdust.

So... what have you heard lately?

Got a tip for Rich? You can contact him or any Bleeding Cool contributor with a story tip, a comment or questions, or to ask about advertising: ***BleedingCool.com/contact***

At the top of each article in Bleeding Cool Magazine, you'll find a shortURL that will take you to the online hub for that topic. You can use that link to share with your friends, or to join in the conversation at the Bleeding Cool online discussion forum: ***BleedingCool.com/forums***





VALIANT 2012

VALIANT

"A compelling, tightly-knit shared universe is a core characteristic of the original hugely popular Valiant line, and I think for good reason - it's reflective of the world outside our window. A shared universe is one the truly special things about comics and makes people fall in love with the medium as early readers. At the same time, we want to make sure the intersections of our characters are well thought out and used to benefit the story, not a trope to facilitate a stunt or big crossover event. The new Valiant has been designed as a company from top-to-bottom with this in mind."

—Jason Kothari, Valiant CEO

VALIANT COMICS: A NEW UNITY

By Keith Davidsen

In the 1990s, Valiant Comics presented comic fans with a shared universe of unique characters that served not as imitators of established superheroes, but rather new concepts altogether. It was a decade where we thrilled to the science fiction of *X-O Manowar*, shivered with fear in the darkness of *Shadowman*, and explored a vibrant history in such titles as *Eternal Warrior* and *Archer & Armstrong*. After several changes in ownership and creative direction, new adventures of the once-beloved Valiant characters were no longer published, leaving dedicated fans waiting for a revival.

Almost a decade later, Valiant is back. Exercising patience rarely seen in an industry of flash and pizzazz, Valiant Entertainment took a slow, deliberate approach to restructuring their titles. As readers of their Free Comic Book Day title can attest, each of their four core titles – *X-O Manowar, Harbinger, Bloodshot,* and *Archer & Armstrong* – are clearly defined as their own entities. Each feels like a distinctly independent idea. "[We need] to make sure that the books can be picked up and read by a new reader," says Warren Simons, Executive Editor. "We're not here to perform an exercise in continuity. Accessibility is key."

Still, Valiant's reputation as a leader in cohesive storytelling precedes them. So, why were these four titles chosen as the basis of the new Valiant universe? What will each series contribute to the overall mythos? The Valiant editorial and creative staff steps up to provide new, keen insight into the construction of a shared universe and an evolution in myth-making.

The Summer of Valiant

With four new #1 issues launching in consecutive months from May through August, the return of Valiant is poised to rule the summer season. But why launch with *X-O Manowar* and this particular batch? Why not, for example, titles like *Eternal Warrior* or *Rai?* "There was a lot of very heated debating," says Dinesh Shamdasani, Valiant's Chief Creative Officer. "With so many great characters, a very strong case could be made for a completely different quartet."

From a practical perspective, the four core titles make good business sense, according to Shamdasani. "Our launch book, *X-O Manowar,* is historically our bestselling title with over 8 million comics sold to date. *Harbinger* is the title that we get asked about the most, the incredible impact it left on comics is still being felt today. With *Bloodshot*, we're able to put a smart, balls-to-the-wall action book out every month, something that used to be a staple of comics but is seen less and less now. And *Archer & Armstrong,* which might be the most acclaimed of our books, lets us tap into the lighter side of the universe while giving us the opportunity to show glimpses of the Valiant universe throughout history."

However, there is a greater editorial reason why these titles are at the heart of the Valiant relaunch, one that Valiant's creative staff is tight-lipped about. Simons says, "Within about a year, you'll see precisely why these four were the tip of the spear. For what we're doing and where

we're headed, the genesis of the Valiant Universe was rooted in the actions of these characters."

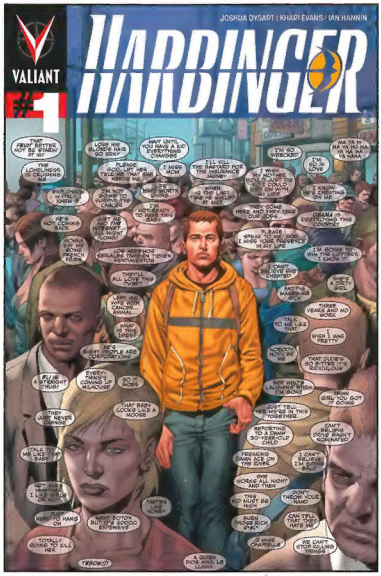
Let's dig a little deeper and see what the folks at Valiant have to say about the individual titles.

X-O Manowar: The Cosmic is His Domain

At the core of X-O Manowar is a man out of time, a Visigoth warrior abducted by an alien menace known as The Vine and transported into the modern day armored in an extraterrestrial combat suit. Of the May launch story, series writer Robert Venditti says, "It's no accident that issue #1 begins at a place of established historical fact. The reader's journey will mimic Aric's, as they follow him from the familiar era of Ancient Rome to an unexpected present filled with aliens, immortals, and psionically-powered heroes."

"He's also a man without any allegiances," Venditti continues. "In a sense, he's the one true defender of Earth, and the entire planet will be his battleground. Looking beyond the confines of Earth, though, *X-O Manowar* represents the cosmic arm of the Valiant Universe. As time goes on, he'll come to understand the full extent of The Vine's reach among the stars, and anything that happens off-world is thoroughly in his domain." Publisher Fred Pierce adds, "The aliens are active on Earth in a way that will make the repercussions of their actions felt all the way down to the present day."

Harbinger: The Modern Zeitgeist



Toyo Harada, the founder of the Harbinger Foundation, was one of the most memorable villains from the original Valiant stories, a man whose vision of a perfect world left no room for disagreement or compromise, and infringes on the rights and freedoms of others. Harada's conflict with renegade Harbinger Peter Stanchek mirrored the age-old struggle between youth and

the establishment. "When you look at Jim Shooter and David Lapham's original run on *Harbinger*, it was a book that was very edgy and ahead of its time – which is what we're hoping this new take on the series can replicate," says Fred Pierce.

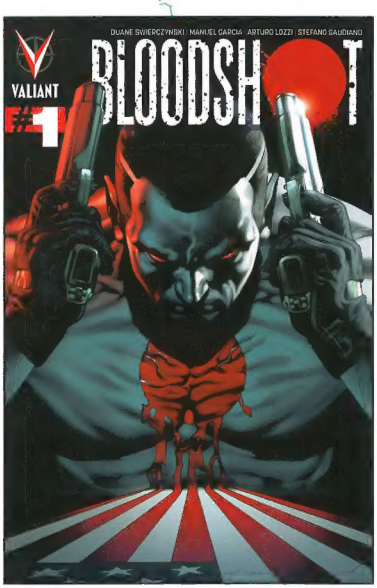
Perhaps Harbinger is the clearest example of how the Valiant Universe is being retooled for a new generation. "Just looking at first issue's cover, you know that our editors, writers, and artists are wired into today's mythos, with the tragedies in today's news," Pierce continues. "With a book so dedicated to keeping its finger on the pulse of the modern zeitgeist, we shouldn't be looking to retell stories when today and tomorrow's world is so much exciting, scary, and riddled with important questions all at the same time. In that way, we hope to have fans anxiously anticipating the next issue."

Bloodshot: Balls-to-the-Wall Action

The term "ultimate soldier" is bounced around a lot in comics, but *Bloodshot* certainly defines the concept. According to Shamdasani, the titular character is "born of technology, the ultimate tool of humanity in its fight against larger forces," a capable warrior fueled by microscopic machines flowing through his very bloodstream.

The political and ethical landscape has changed since America's War on Terror, a changed playing field that redefines Bloodshot from his previous incarnation in comics. Fred Pierce confirms, "The world was always a dangerous place, but Bloodshot allows readers to jump inside the mind of a man that is quite literally a walking weapon of mass destruction. How the character is used by his handlers, how he perceives and is perceived in a post-9/11 world... these perspectives are distinctly different from how he was portrayed in the original series. We are living in an entirely new world."

"Just as every well-oiled machine needs a wrench in the works, and every ointment needs a fly, and... well, insert your favorite 'screwing things up big-time' metaphor here... I see Bloodshot as wonderfully disruptive rogue element in the Valiant universe," says Duane Swierczynski, the writer of the relaunched series. "There are powerful forces trying to shape the world; Bloodshot was created by one, and is trying to be controlled by the other. As he becomes more self-aware, Bloodshot's having none of either. Like a classic hardboiled hero straight out of the Dashiell Hammett playbook, he's going to play both sides against the middle and maybe even recover his own soul in the process.



Bloodshot – whatever his real name may be – is cut from the some ultra-rugged cloth as The Continental Op and The Man with No Name, though in a much bigger world with higher stakes. That's what makes him so much fun to write."

Archer & Armstrong: Secret Histories

Beginning in August, the *Archer & Armstrong* series brings back one of comics' most unusual pairings: a young martial artist and an ancient libertine. According to publisher Fred Pierce, "We see a man with the 10,000-year-old perspective of a hardened cynic juxtaposed against a powerful 'boy', updated to reflect the attitudes of not only today's youth, but also a certain morally conservative strain of Middle American." By comparison to the character's previous continuity, "Archer's origin in the context of his parents speaks much more of the modern day and we will learn more about Armstrong's past, and those of his two immortal brothers, in the opening pages of the first issue."

"*Archer & Armstrong* is the secret history of the Valiant Universe," adds writer Fred Van Lente. "Our primary antagonists, The Sect, have existed for thousands of years as a network of all the secret societies that have existed around the world. They've spent thousands of years trying to unlock the devastating secret of Armstrong's immortality, which destroyed the ancient civilization he hailed from. This struggle between Armstrong and The Sect has been going on for millennia, and influenced all the major events in Valiant history in significant ways – no more so than now, as the Sect has never been closer to achieving their goals (and ending the world). We'll soon see how relevant they are to all the major players in the Valiant Universe... no less so than Armstrong's brothers, Gilad the Eternal Warrior and Ivar the Timewalker."

Where Do We Go From Here?

The creators and editors were hesitant to give too much away, but they did confirm cameo appearances from "Valiant's most classic and beloved characters" during the summer. Shamdasani promised that the a major immortal character would occur as early as *X-O Manowar #1*, presumably either Gilad or Ivar.

But the real story here isn't which characters are making guest appearances where; it's the heart at the core of a beloved line's return. "This has been a team effort in every way," says Simons. "My colleagues and our creators are working with a sense of dedication that is breathtakingly beautiful to witness on a daily basis. It makes my editorial heart swell with joy to see how these guys and gals are dedicated to re-imagining the titles."

Pierce wrapped up by saying "storylines are being reinvented and repositioned for a new decade and a new level of sophistication for today's readers. This is a brand new beginning for the universe and new place to discover this vibrant array of characters. Those who haven't ever read a Valiant book won't feel as if they have been left out of the loop, and the greatest Valiant fans will say, 'I don't believe it, I love what the guys are doing with characters and the universe.'"

HOT COMICS
By Rich Johnston

We learned it on the first day of Economics 101. The price of a good is determined by the point where demand and scarcity meet.

Comic book retailers know how to order things that are tried and tested. Unless you're surprise-killing Captain America, they're pretty much down with that. But anything new is an unknown quantity and ordered as conservatively as Rick Perry's underwear.

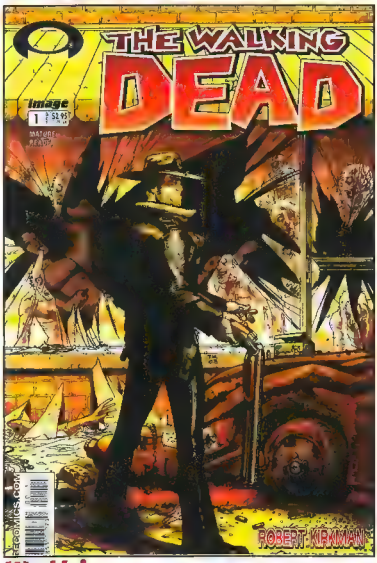
It wasn't always this way. When Image Comics started, sales on their first books outstripped Marvel and DC's sales. Yes, the creators were known quantities, but the books were not. Now take the publication of America's Got Powers, drawn by a similar comics superstar of today. And it was lucky to crack the top fifty. No wonder the aftermarket rewarded that demand with increased prices.

For speculators looking to make a quick buck, that's where you should look. The no-brainer-popular book that doesn't feature a major superhero character outside of Marvel and DC. Then flip it for a profit and reinvest.

But should comic book speculation be encouraged? Well, in the bad old days, comic book speculation focused on enhanced covers, rewarding surface details, and the market crashed. Today, speculation is driven by content, rewarding the new, the different, the surprising. And that has to be a good thing for any industry.

Just, you know, don't bet the farm.

In the following sections, we'll take a look at some of the hottest comics for the months of May and June in 2012.



Walking *Dead* was the first of recent Image comics to start to build up an after-market, as early issues got rare rather quickly. The TV series then clicked that up a notch. Now the first issue sells for up to $8000 and even very recent issues have hit double digits. Anyone who has been collecting the series can clean up. Check out the Price Guide on page 11 for some current book values.

Jedi Origin and Boba Fett's death have thrown a spotlight on Dark Horse *Star Wars* comics. And while retailers have learned to order high on these new *Star Wars* event books, increasingly high profile

and well-reviewed titles will increase demand for those earlier issues more.

Crossed could well be a *Walking-Dead*-waiting-to-happen, with its incredibly violent take on the zombie mythos, combined with strong authorial voices. Early copies can still be found for cover price, and may be worth squirrelling away.

Chew is already a strong after market performer, but the inevitable TV series or blockbuster movie will send it into the stratosphere. Ditto for *Morning Glories*, *Thief Of Thieves* and *Nonplayer*. Those may be *Walking Deads* waiting to happen.

Check out Grant Morrison and Darick Robertson's *Happy*. If retailers couldn't order enough of *Saga*, there's no way they'll order enough of this book, from one of the leading writers in comics and the co-creator of both *Transmetropolitan* and *The Boys*.

BOOM! Studios have stolen a march on many publishers by lining up web comic creators for books like *Adventure Time*. Look for a lot more of this, as other print publishers don't quite get the popularity and passion these creators can muster. July's *Adventure Time: Marceline And The Scream Queens* is a cert to be under ordered. See "Defining the BOOM! Generation" on page 14 of this issue of BCM for more information.

X-O *Manowar...* Valiant looks poised to do what they did the first time. For more information about this and other upcoming Valiant titles, check out the article on page 5 of this issue of Bleeding Cool.

The easiest way for most recent comic readers to clean up, is to check their bookshelves. Marvel especially puts books out of print very quickly, leaving whatever demand is left twisting in the wind. Go through your Marvel hardcovers and check the Amazon Marketplace listings. Then get ready to clean up.

THE WALKING DEAD
Price Guide

The Walking Dead is nothing less than a sensation. A black and white indie comic that has spun off a TV show, computer and board games, toys, watches, and a market desperate to catch up with its success. While its collected volumes dominate bookstores, the monthly sales have never quite reflected that. Leading people happy to spent huge amounts of money to get those copies months and years later.

Simply put, if you have been collecting *The Walking Dead* as a comic book for any period of time, you are sitting on a gold mine. Below are some recently reported sales of the individual comics, as actually sold on eBay. These are for Near Mint copies sold to the right people at the right time, but not signed or CGC slabbed copies. If you sell in bulk or sell to shops you should expect less. If they are in great condition, you could get them verified by CGC and find they are worth a lot more. But if nothing else, it should give you motivation to get to your long boxes and hit eBay.

Retailers who would like to become part of an advisory board for the expanded Price Guide features when the first issue of Bleeding Cool launches, should contact Keith Davidsen via email: *keithdavidsen@bleedingcool.com*

The Walking Dead

01		$1025
02		$580
03		$400
04		$220
05		$180
06		$150
07		$90
08		$90
09		$65
10		$75
11		$50
12		$45
13		$40
14		$45
15		$38
16		$30
17		$30
18		$27
19	First Michonne	$425
20		$41
21		$34
22		$30
23		$26
24		$27
25		$31
26		$35
27	First The Governor	$260
28		$31
29		$33
30		$26
31		$25
32		$26
33	Michonne V. Governor	$67
34		$46
35		$21
36		$24
37		$25
38		$25
39		$25
40		$16
41		$16
42		$22
43		$25
44		$27
45		$30
46		$28
47		$30
48		$60
49		$26
50		$25
51		$20
52		$16
53	First Abraham	$60
54		$19
55		$20
56		$18
57		$20
58		$24
59		$26
60		$29
61	Chew	$87
62		$20
63	Chew	$63
64		$18
65		$13
66		$17
67		$17
68		$18
69		$30
70		$16
71		$14
72		$14
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83		$10
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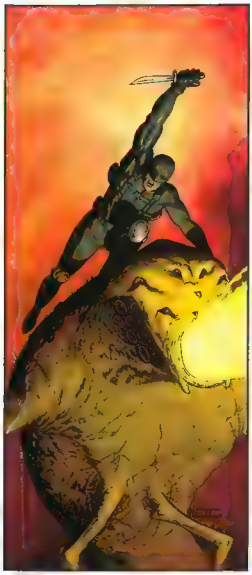
85		$12
86		$13
87		$11
88		$14
89		$13
90		$15
91		$30
92		$34
93		$24
94		$17
95		$4
96		$6
97		$3

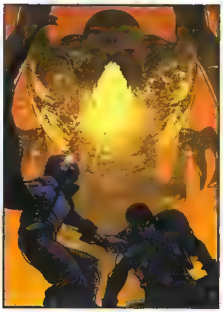
Variants

02	2nd Print	$215
07	2nd Print	$50
08	2nd Print	$50
33	2nd Print	$180
34	2nd Print	$25
35	Misprint	$200
48	Misprint	$200
50	2nd Print	$15
50	Larsen	$50
50	Adams	$35
75	Ultimate	$200
75	RRP	$75
75	San Diego	$22
78	Long Beach	$81
80	Arizona	$60
81	Comics Pro	$137
85	Infinity	$50
85	Ketner	$21
87	San Diego	$23
88	Fan Expo	$50
94	Image Expo	$150
94	Image BW	$400

DEATH BECOMES HIM

CROSSED: WISH YOU WERE HERE WRITER SIMON SPURRIER LAUNCHES EXTERMINATION





by Bethany Sarver

The man's got a taste for the macabre. A long-standing and accomplished U.K. writer known for innovative and complex sci-fi series across the pond with 2000 A.D., Simon Spurrier is hitting a bit of a renaissance with the U.S. independent scene: hand-picked by Garth Ennis to continue the legacy of the blood-soaked *Crossed* franchise with a *Freak Angels*-style online web comic called *Wish You Were Here*, Spurrier ups the ante with a new series from BOOM! Studios with the sunshine title *Extermination*.

"In Extermination we're taking Costumed Conventionality as our starting-point then stamping on it until it shrieks."
— Simon Spurrier

It's truly a story of "We lost, they won," as Spurrier weaves through the wake of an apocalyptic alien invasion, exploring the idea of the world's greatest super-heroes and deadliest super-villains forced to form an alliance to prevent their own extermination. By bringing two arch-enemies together—one a driven hero named Nox and the other a ruthless villain who goes by Red Reaper—the series provides two provocative perspectives that revolve around a volatile partnership formed for survival and the greater good. Spurrier fearlessly turns the super-hero genre on its head while boldly exploring its deepest, darkest crevices. "The enemy of your enemy is your friend," but in the world of *Extermination*, nothing is so clearly black and white.

SIMON SAYS

"It's Mad Max with super-powers."

Not often does a one-line pitch conjure such a froth of images and ideas. ***Extermination*** lassoed my brain at the first post, bombarded me with a psi-bomb of possibilities and themes, and wrung-out my excitement-gland like an adrenaline enema. The tale which has emerged wears its High Concept on its rad-ravaged, rust-mangled sleeve, then plunges it into altogether more complex, darker and more rancid waters. It's a thing of blistering deserts, acidic snowscapes, insane salvaged machinery, hi-octane chases and seething apocalyptic alien madness... but more importantly it's a story about two people — two bitter enemies — forced together for survival and salvation.

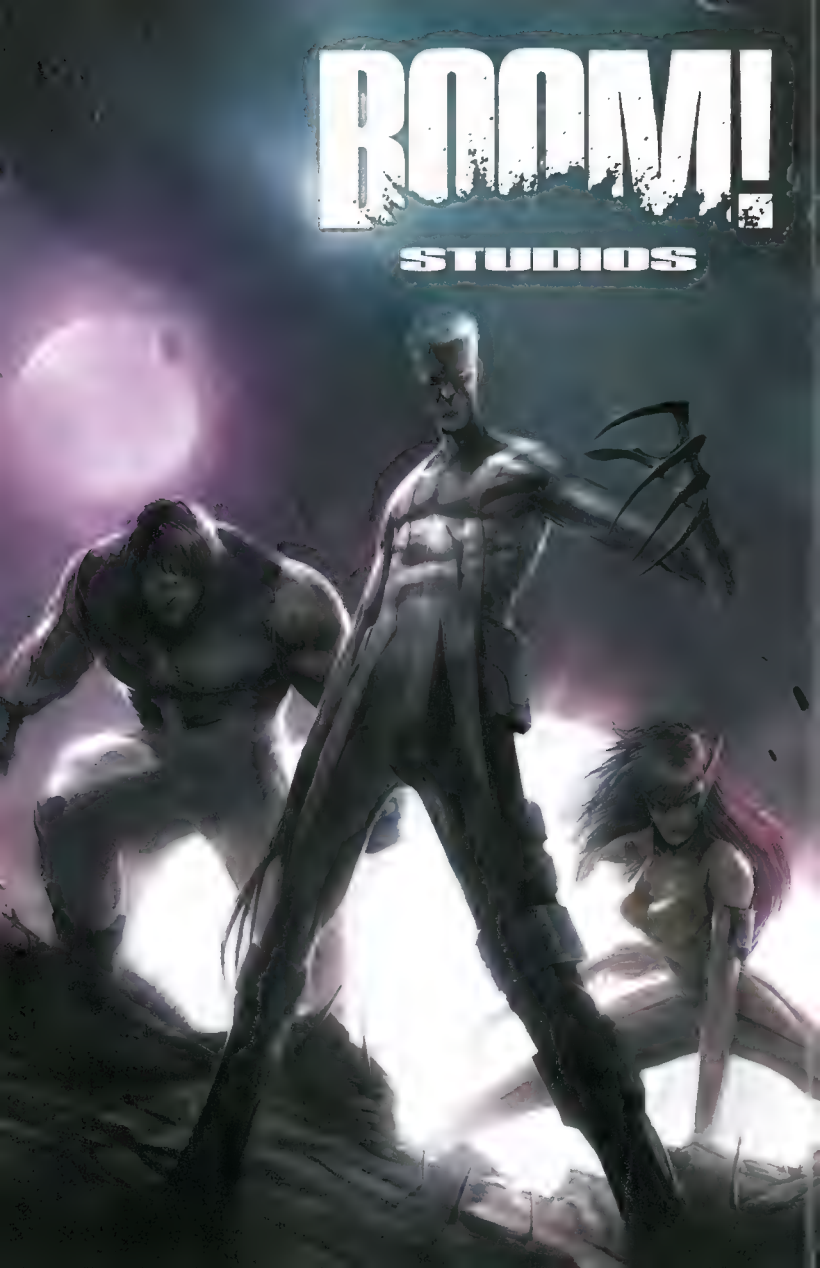
Sometimes I think the two-tone morality of spandex comics can stray into an unhealthily simplistic view of the world — are you a Good Guy or a Bad Guy? All too often our beloved Hit-Things-Until-They're-Fixed ™ genre dodges the gorgeous, ghastly nuances of what's ***truly*** right and wrong. In ***Extermination*** we're taking Costumed Conventionality as our starting-point then stamping on it until it shrieks.

In the boldly-coloured old world our two main characters were polar opposites: the cowl-wearing vigilante Nox and the megalomaniacal villain Red Reaper. But in the new world — a world in which the psychic technologies of the astral EDDA invaders have crippled the Earth, decimated its defences and humbled its heroes — all the old certainties must be re-evaluated. What's the good of a crime-fighter in a world without law? Where's the evil in a ruthless empire-builder on a planet-sized cinder?

Only together — despite years of shared history and hate — can the two men hope to save their tortured species. Only by travelling the ash-roads, assembling the burnt-out remnants of a bygone age, and taking the fight back to the devils who so grievously defeated them, can they heal the wounds of their world.

But both men have secrets. Both men have scores to settle and vendettas to pursue, and amidst the wreckage of civilisation nothing is as simple as it once was.

— Simon Spurrier


BOOM!
STUDIOS

DEFINING THE BOOM! GENERATION

By Rich Johnston

From humble beginnings to winning "Best Publisher Under 4%" for a few years as voted by comic book retailers in Diamond's Gem Awards, BOOM! Studios have developed owner Ross Richie's passion for comics into one of the best known comic publishing houses in the industry. With a mix of original and licensed books, BOOM! has won a number of Eisner and Harvey Awards and has found the proverbial Fountain of Youth by bringing kids into comics with books like *Adventure Time*, while helping slightly older readers feel young again by bringing *Planet of the Apes* and *Hellraiser* back to comics.

They've even taken a chance on yours truly writing a couple of their books, which either bodes well for the industry, or predicts its imminent doom, depending on which reviews you come across. But it means that, literally, anyone might have a chance of coming up with a cool idea and see it on the stands. And they pay as well, which is always nice. Indeed, quite a few friends of Bleeding Cool have found homes there of late. Grace Randolph, who runs two video blogs on the website, writes *Supurbia*. And Si Spurrier, who runs' Bleeding Cool's redesign competitions writes *Extermination*! It's almost like Bleeding Cool's very own comic book wing.

CEO Ross Richie got his start in funny books at Malibu Comics, from around the time that Image left to the time it was sold to Marvel. He later revived the British publishing house Atomeka with Dave Elliott, before imagining his own publishing vision for what would become BOOM! Studios. The aim was to take the lessons he had learned from Malibu, and do it better, applying them to the modern comics market. Ross' first book reunited him with Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis trying to kick-start the old Justice League style of comedy super heroics with *Hero Squared*.

A mixture of original work from familiar creators with licensed comics from less familiar talent provided a backbone for the publisher. The hard-fought-for Disney license allowed BOOM! to learn that the kids market wasn't dead as some insisted, and taught new lessons about how to create books that captured the imaginations of young readers. Success with *Mickey*, the *Muppets*, and the Pixar characters helped the fledgling and aptly named

Some people think burning books is a crime. But BOOM! thinks it's fun. For a number of books, such as *Valen The Outcast #1*, *Fanboys Vs Zombies #1* and *Higher Earth #1*, they've commissioned covers by the likes of Joe Jusko and Arthur Suydam and John Cassaday, run a print run and then delivered CGC 9.8 slabbed versions to shops who have ordered hundreds of copies of the normal version. And those left over? They burn! And film the burning! And dance around chanting to the Gods of Speculation.

KaBOOM! Imprint to take off and develop many new talents and opportunities. They found Grace Randolph and Roger Langridge through their work on the *Muppet* comics and opened the door to bigger and better projects such as *Supurbia* and *Snarked*. And when Disney bought up Marvel, and Boom found their licenses stripped with it, Boom looked to the likes of Charles M. Shultz's *Peanuts* and the monster hit *Adventure Time*. Their imprint KaBOOM! quickly became one of the powerhouse studios for all ages publications, which have little to rival them. And filling *Adventure Time* with the work of indie webcomic creators, each with five or six figure Twitter following accounts to be directed to their nearest comic shop at a whim, has been inspired.

Getting Clive Barker back doing *Hellraiser* comics was a coup, especially considering the considerable reinvention he has brought to that property. *The Planet of the Apes* series has accompanied a recent reboot of the movies, instead focussed on the feel of the originals, intending to enrich that experience. A rare trick, especially considering the vagaries of modern licensing demands.

Mark Waid, who was writing a series of revisionist superhero books for BOOM! such as *Irredeemable* and *Incorruptible*, also became their Editor-In-Chief. Attaching such a high profile name to their company, where you might have expected him to be at Marvel or DC, also gave the publisher a big boost.

Sam Humphries, who hit big with *Our Love Is Real* and now the *Ultimates* writer for Marvel, has both sci-fi spectacle *Higher Earth* and convention fodder *Fanboys Vs Zombies* out, and reaping rewards. I understand that the first issue of *Fanboys* outsold Mark Waid's *Irredeemable* first issue two-to-one.

And yes, as I said, one day Ross Richie called me up. He had liked my work on *Holed Up* and asked me to write four parody comic books based on the Marvel Studios movies. Apparently Keith Giffen was busy at DC so I decided to test the waters by sending in my first script entitled *Iron Muslim*. They took it and published it. Surprised, I kept going.

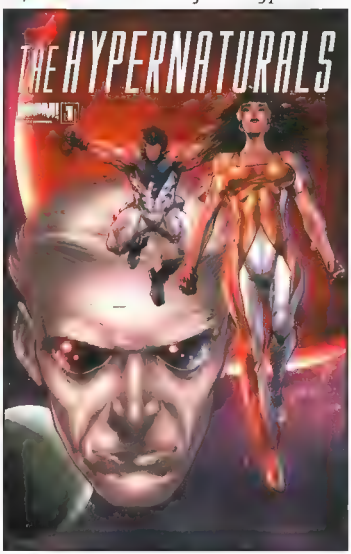
Because that's the thing about BOOM!, it's really hard to pin them down. Experimental project here, kids all ages project there, licensed title this way, original twisted superhero that way. It's like a pick'n'mix for all of Ross' favourite comic

Sam Humphries is a victim of his own success. But pulling himself up by his bootstraps, writing, self-publishing and self-distributing *Our Love Is Real*, a comic about when Judge Dredd gets intimate with his poodle, he got work with Marvel on *John Carter* and *Ultimates*, and BOOM! on *Fanboys Vs Zombies* (its first issue outselling Mark Waid's Irredeemable two-to-one) and *Higher Earth* which is, basically, Han Solo with a samurai sword. I can see the cosplay already.

books, expect he's got a publisher to put them all out. Now he seems to have turned his gaze towards Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning, famed for their work for 2000AD, Dark Horse, DC and Marvel. And, when the Dune license got delayed, he pushed their new comic *Hypernaturals* into this year's Free Comic Book Day. Basically, he's gone nuts deep with his new toys. But what exactly has he got to play with?

Back in 2000, before their current reputation for all things cosmic, Abnett and Lanning relaunched *Legion of Superheroes* for DC Comics as *Legion Lost* and then just plain old *Legion*. And now they are doing it again. Ish.

Hypernaturals appears to be a very different take on that *Legion of Superheroes* idea, a future humanity genetically diversified over the galaxy, with super powered people popping up. And being drafted to serve. Here's their promo for the series, starting in July.



It is the far future; the human race has finally colonized the galaxy, preserving an era of prosperity that's only possible because of The Hypernaturals. They're a celebrated, galaxy-wide superhero task force that keeps the peace. That is, until they all mysteriously vanish. Now, as the galaxy teeters on the brink of chaos, it's up to a group of retired and long forgotten Hypernaturals – and their novice recruits – to save the galaxy from complete destruction. Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning, the superstar writing duo behind ANNIHILATION and THE LEGION, launch an all-new original series that takes cosmic super-heroes to a new frontier. Experience the special preview issue of THE HYPERNATURALS this May and pick up the #1 issue this July!

Well, thankfully I haven't had to wait that long. I did read my copy of the comic

Si Spurrier, who is working on *X-Club* for Marvel and *Crossed: Wish You Were Here* for Avatar, is taking superheroes apart in *Extermination* for BOOM! this June. He told me ***"We're basically imagining one of the Big! Generic! Event! crossovers we see every few years from the mainstream super-duper publishers – aliens invade the world - and, dum dum duuuum, they totally Win. All the brightly-coloured spandex wankers on the planet couldn't stop 'em. And so the world dies, and the vast majority of the population are annihilated, and in the mangled ruins we find two survivors. Before the event they were mortal enemies: one street-level vigilante hero; one mincing megalomaniacal science-tyrant. Now? Now they're forced to stick together just to survive... up until they encounter something unexpected which hurls them off together on a very unexpected – and utterly vital – new mission."***

on an iPad which is a little like reading it in the future.

The first issue kicks off with a classic structure, the flash forward and the flashback. We know something terrible has happened to the Hypernaturals, as a rescue attempt is being put together, then we flash back to their original mission. It instils a feeling of dread, without giving away exactly what tragedy is to befall them.

It also reminds me quite a lot of the first *Giant Sized X-Men* comic, with one team off to rescue the other, except this time the old team are rescuing the new. Oh, and one who is the spitting image of Wolverine.

The difference between this comic and their Legion work is, obviously, all bets are off. Anyone can die... and probably will. Characters can perform actions that might otherwise harm a merchandising deal. And neither Abnett nor Lanning will ever receive a note saying they can't use a gun or that no one can smoke, or what about introducing a future Joker cameo? It's completely their world to play with. And they flesh it out as well, creating different types of media and communication for the characters, as well as magazine articles and history extracts to fill out the universe.

BOOM! is also hoping that the pair will bring their Cosmic audience from Marvel as well. Abnett and Lanning have made it their own over the last few years, working on books like *Nova*, *Annihilators*, *War Of Kings*, *The Thanos Imperative*, and *Guardians Of The Galaxy*. It's been a bit of a cottage industry for them, and they've managed to create excitement on those titles for the first time since the likes of Jim Valentino or Jim Starlin. And neither of them is called Jim, which is even more impressive.

BOOM! has become expert in picking up well-known names who maybe aren't quite as appreciated by the bigger companies, playing to their strengths and taking advantage of the "gap of unappreciation" as I'm calling, and possibly trademarking, it. The danger is, of course, that by their actions, the creators involved may suddenly become so successful that the Big Two will want to take them back...

Of course, it's also quite possible that one of these books may take off in a massive *Walking Dead*-esque fashion. And in which case, Marvel and DC can go swivel.

Grace Randolph starred in *The Watcher* webisodes for Marvel Comics until she was dropped for rather dubious reasons. Bleeding Cool snapped her up for two videos a week, while she continues her film review weblog, Beyond The Trailer. Her BOOM! book, *Supurbia*, is set in a world not unlike *Desperate Housewives* or *Weeds* but where the characters have superheroic secrets to hide and deal with. After the mini-series concludes, *Supurbia* will follow up with an on-going series. And I can't exactly see Grace stopping there...

SUMMER BLOCKBUSTERS
By Brendon Connelly

It all started in 1975. Before then, people would rather get some sun in the summertime, maybe even go swimming. But then *Jaws* gave us all two good reasons to stay off the beaches. Spielberg's record breaker managed to hold onto the number one slot for 14 straight weeks in the summer of '75 (eat that, *Hunger Games)* and the Blockbuster season was born.

The next summer, another omen, in the form of, well, *The Omen* and then, in '77, *Star Wars*. Now there was no turning back.

35 years later, the studios have kept to the calendar, but cooked up some new marketing tricks. Though it's raining outside while I write this (I envy you, dear reader) I've already been screened sections of several incomplete summer blockbusters.

So, how are they looking?

Amazing Spider-Man

The reboot we weren't quite ready for sees Marc Webb stepping over Sam Raimi, and Andrew Garfield picking up the mantle of the first, the most loved, the... whitest Spider-Man, Peter Parker.

Garfield has great chemistry with co-star Emma Stone, and the scenes of them together that I previewed suggest Peter and new-original girlfriend Gwen Stacy will be reason enough to see the film even before the silver ballet slippers go on and people start falling off of bridges. The two minutes of Lizard or so that we saw didn't seem as interesting as even 30 seconds of Rhys Ifans as Curt Connors, though that's arguably a good thing.

Release date: *July 3rd in UK and US*
Sony Columbia

Snow White and the Huntsman

From a 30 minute preview of *Snow White and the Huntsman*, I came away having "banked" some good, clear memories of Charlize Theron as the conniving, wicked queen, but I could barely remember that Kristen Stewart, starring as the titular Snow White, was in it at all. Chris Hemsworth fares better, and the dwarves certainly left quite an impression. Don't expect *Mirror, Mirror* or *Faerie Tale Theatre* – think of something more like Ridley Scott's *Legend*.

Release date: *June 1st in UK and US*
Universal

Prometheus

The prequel to *Alien* that wasn't. But it is. Trust me. You're going to get the exact connections to the earlier films that you've been waiting for, and plenty of surprises too. Having seen the opening sequences of the film, uninterrupted and in sharp, digital 3D, I was given quite a good handle on the mood of the thing, and how well cast the film is. Anybody who has seen the trailers will have some idea how impressive the production design and cinematography are. But... is it going to be scary? Yes. Eventually. But get ready for a slow burn in the first act, and lots of big sci-fi ideas before the alien placenta hits the fan.

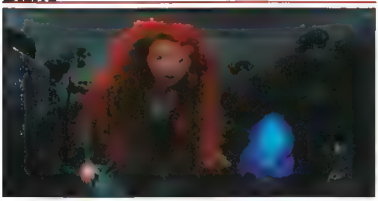
Release dates: *June 1st, UK / June 8th, US*
20th Century Fox

GI Joe: Retaliation

From the director of *Step Up 2* and *Justin Bieber: Never Say Never* comes... a testosterone-soaked action figure smackdown? Well, not quite. As well as The Rock and Bruce Willis spraying you in the face with their shell casings, there's a lot of more choreographed - and to my eye, exciting - melee combat. Swords and sais, oh my. And from the ten minute preview I saw, there's an awful lot of gimmicks and gadgets in play too.

Release dates: *29th June, US / 3rd August , UK*
Paramount Pictures

Brave



Pixar's first non-sequel since 2009 was feeling, from its first 30 minutes, an awful lot like a Studio Ghibli movie. Merida stands up to her mother, refuses an arranged marriage and, accidentally, brings a curse down on her family – note that not only is the lead character female, as has been so widely reported, so is the second-lead. If they need an eleventh-hour title change from *Brave*, I might suggest Wonderful, Breathtaking, Witty or Wry.

Release dates: *22th June, US / 13th August , UK*
Walt Disney Pictures

And finally... The Dark Knight Rises

I've only seen what you've seen in the IMAX preview, and I've only heard what you've heard. And I didn't understand half of what Bane was saying either. There's over an hour of large-format footage in the film so at least there's going to be acres to look at, much of the time, even if the soundtrack turns to *funmkemmmm shimmntmm.*

Release dates: *20th July in US and UK*
Warner Bros.

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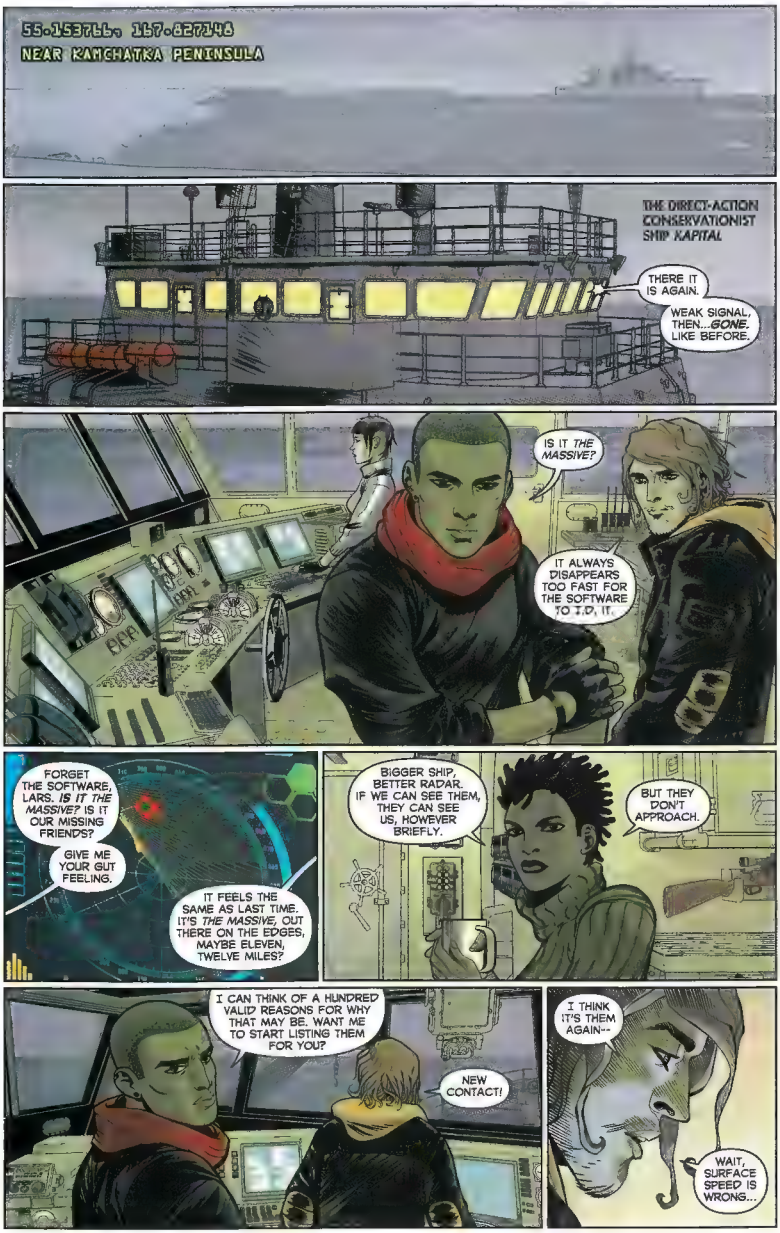
DARK HORSE COMICS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NEAR KAMCHATKA PENINSULA
THE DIRECT-ACTION CONSERVATIONIST SHIP KAPITAL
THERE IT IS AGAIN.
WEAK SIGNAL, THEN...GONE. LIKE BEFORE.
IS IT THE MASSIVE?
IT ALWAYS DISAPPEARS TOO FAST FOR THE SOFTWARE TO I.D. IT.
FORGET THE SOFTWARE, LARS. IS IT THE MASSIVE? IS IT OUR MISSING FRIENDS?
GIVE ME YOUR GUT FEELING.
IT FEELS THE SAME AS LAST TIME. IT'S THE MASSIVE, OUT THERE ON THE EDGES, MAYBE ELEVEN, TWELVE MILES?
BIGGER SHIP, BETTER RADAR. IF WE CAN SEE THEM, THEY CAN SEE US, HOWEVER BRIEFLY.
BUT THEY DON'T APPROACH.
I CAN THINK OF A HUNDRED VALID REASONS FOR WHY THAT MAY BE. WANT ME TO START LISTING THEM FOR YOU?
NEW CONTACT!
I THINK IT'S THEM AGAIN--
WAIT. SURFACE SPEED IS WRONG...

THE MASSIVE: THE NEXT BIG THING FOR BRIAN WOOD

By Keith Davidsen

Brian Wood explores dramatic landscapes from every angle. We've seen it time and time again in such titles as *DMZ* and *Northlanders*, both bestsellers that were instant hits with fans and critics alike. While his stories are deeply personal, he meticulously builds the environment with rich geographic, political, and cultural layers. It's no wonder that we're drawn helplessly (and ultimately, with much gratitude) into the worlds that he creates. But what happens when Wood decides instead to destroy a world?

In *The Massive*, Wood examines a world after the collapse of... well, everything. Captain Callum Israel, an environmentalist steering the good ship Kapital, has seen his noble cause dashed. After all, how can you save a planet that's already doomed? Israel and his surviving crew struggle on, setting their resolve to the only goal that remains: finding their missing sister ship, the Massive.... which is not an easy task, since the waters now harbor dangerous pirates, rebels, and other threats.

Taking a break from his workload on five monthly titles, Wood graciously answered Bleeding Cool Magazine's questions about this highly-anticipated project.

BCM: How would you define Callum Israel? How would you compare his personality, perspective, and skills to other lead characters you've worked with?

Wood: He's both similar and completely different... he's older, around 50 years, which is pretty different from most of my past leads. And with that comes a much deeper and richer history. But in a way that mirrors past characters like Matty Roth, Megan McKeenan, and Riley Wilder; he sits in the middle of a lot of conflicting opinions, the world changing around him, and so is forced to change with it whether he wants to or not.

The basics: he's a white man of mixed background who was raised in Bangladesh. As a young man, he was employed by the military contractor corporation Blackbell, a sort of early version of Halliburton. After a life-changing experience with a rogue wave in the North Sea, he quits that line of work and applies his skills to direct action environmentalism, and has done this for close to two decades.

In DMZ, Matty Roth was an inexperienced everyman dropped into an extraordinary situation. The global crisis of The Massive appears to be the mother of all extraordinary situations. How prepared is Israel to handle situations as the series progresses?

Who can prepare for the end of the world, really? This is where the meat of the Massive story takes place. He and the rest of the cast (and really, the rest of the world) are in this extraordinary situation and have zero choice but to deal with it. Right off the bat, he'll find his activist moral code challenged, and we take it from there.

Most post-apocalyptic storylines revolve around personal survival, and yet The Massive focuses on people whose responsibility is to the survival of the natural world. Will personal survival still be an issue in THE MASSIVE? What are your thoughts on your departure from the norm of apocalyptic scenarios with its more global focus?

My thoughts were really to build off what I had done already with DMZ, and to give myself a challenge. Less thought went into whatever

the norms of the genre are, to be honest. And I'm not really convinced The Massive IS part of that genre, at least not in an immediately recognizable way.

And personal survival IS the issue now. The world's ended, in a way... in the sense that the battle, such as it was, to preserve it has failed. So what's left but to forge a new life in this changed world? I will admit there is a bit of a mystery to be solved regarding the environmental crash, but the story of the series is the story of this group of people trying to come to grips with what's happened.

What are your thoughts on seeding Dark Horse Presents with the first few chapters of The Massive prior to launching the series?

It was suggested to me, and its benefits were obvious. The DHP stories function both as legitimate content for that anthology and also an advertisement for the main series. It allowed me, and the artist Kristian Donaldson, to get up to speed and "break in" the story, and it was also an interesting way to explore some backstory that may or may not have made sense to be included in the main story. It stands retroactively as a sort of extra now, as bonus content. I think it's available digitally, via the Dark Horse site and app, for a buck.

Is The Massive rooted in your own personal experiences? Are there specific, real-life influences on this work?

Not really. There have been things in my past that can be said to have piqued an interest in the ocean, or ships, but nothing that formative. The best story is, as a twelve year-old, going to Scotland for the first time and taking a (very) small ferry through the North Sea to the Shetland Islands, literally traversing shipping lanes filled with Soviet tankers. This was 1984, I was twelve, and the Cold War held enormous appeal to be as something both cool and scary. But where my own personal experiences come into play will be mostly invisible, and limited to the main character Callum.

Beyond personal experiences, what research did you do, leading to the ultimate realization of this dense, rich, and detailed world?

I did what I always do, and that's to read a lot of books. Too many books, as usual, but that's my modus operandi. I'm giving myself a bit of a break on this one; after putting myself through the rigors of demanding a really high level of accuracy on my Northlanders series, I'm allowing myself to be pretty loosey-goosey with some of the science in The Massive. I mean, I'll still aim to get it right, but I'm not killing myself this time around. Hopefully only futurists and climatologists will find anything to criticize. Anyway, the point of the story is the people, always the people.

When conceiving of The Massive, what did you see as the strengths Kristian Donaldson would bring to the project? Have there been "Oooh, that's going to challenge Kristian" moments in the writing of your scripts?

Everything challenges him. This is a fantastically ambitious book and is wall-to-wall with impossible things to draw. Wait 'til you see what he does! Actually, the book was conceived of way earlier than the artist selection. It goes back to 2010, and was meant to be a Vertigo book launching immediately after the end of DMZ (which was December of last year). Kristian didn't come onboard until the project had moved to Dark Horse, in mid-2011.

BCM: Last question... what's something that you can share about the development of The Massive that nobody knows?

The story of The Massive is essentially a great mystery, so I am hesitant to tease too much of the plot, but I will say that I have another rejected Vertigo project called Starve that I plan to rework as a Massive sequel, set in the same world but on land, dealing with water scarcity, the politics of food, and what we refer to as the "1%". I hope the sales hold up and enable it to happen!

A1

$3.99

ISSUE :001

ATOMEKA

Where Wonderland, Oz, Neverland, Mars and Elysium meet one small band of warriors protect this magical gateway in

THE WEIRDING WILLOWS

The Return of the Immortal soldier BLAZING GLORY in

ODYSSEY

32 pages MONTHLY OCTOBER

THE ATOMEKA AGE

By Rich Johnston

Dave Elliott is back. Best known for being a comic book inker, editor, and publisher, his greatest success has been facilitating the projects of other people.

From Alan Moore and Garry Leach on *Marvelman* for Warrior, Simon Bisley, Ted McKeever, Glenn Fabry for the anthology *A1* at his own publisher Atomeka, and then Marvel's Epic Comics, as well as bringing his associates in to work on projects at Penthouse, Tundra and Radical, with a brief revival of Atomeka that helped kick-start BOOM! Studios. Of late he's also managed a number of people working on new Image Comics titles.

But now he's picking up the pen to write comics again, and bringing back Atomeka once more to do so. I talked to Dave briefly about his history and asked him why he facilitated others more that created his own work, and why he seemed to find himself working outside of the likes of Marvel and DC Comics. He told me "purely because it is easier to do things that haven't been done before. I love working with people to create new worlds. I'm a *huge* Jack Kirby fan and felt no one built entire worlds in comics like he did. Marvel just wouldn't exist today without him."

I asked him what he learnt working at such, often controversial, companies. "Every company taught me something. Equal amounts of how to do things right and wrong. Some companies taught me more than others. Lessons were all experience... They don't teach this stuff in school."

As to what he was most proud of? "A1 without a doubt. Garry and myself had a lot of fun with that title and we introduced many creators to the concept of "doing it for themselves" which was the primary reason behind A1 in the first place."

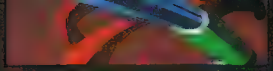
And as for choosing the writing reins again, "When we started Atomeka/A1 it was so we could both do our own material. We allowed others to do stories as well and didn't expect the reaction we got. It seemed crazy to turn all that talent away. Then I found out how much went into publishing, marketing, production, editing, leaving no time for creation. Now after achieving so much for others it's time to do it for myself. I'll be working very closely with Imaginary Friends Studios and Stellar Labs on the material. Garrie Gastonny, who did *Supergod*, *Caliber* and ***The Vault***, will be drawing the 'superhero' strip *Odyssey* and Barnaby Bagus will be drawing *The Weirding Willows*, with some short stories by Sami Basri. I have a dozen ideas I'd like to do, but will be happy if I can do half of them."

It seems that every now and then, it's time for Atomeka and *A1* again. What Dave Elliott will bring to the party now that he's writing all the stories, we'll have to wait to discover. He's certainly worked with the very best teachers.

Previews of both his new series will appear in *Heavy Metal* magazine, on sale in July, and at San Diego Comic Con.

A NEW HERO HAS APPEARED...

...TO SAVE WEBCOMICS!



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AND MUCH MORE!

BRAVOMAN

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SHIFTYLOOK
By Rich Johnston

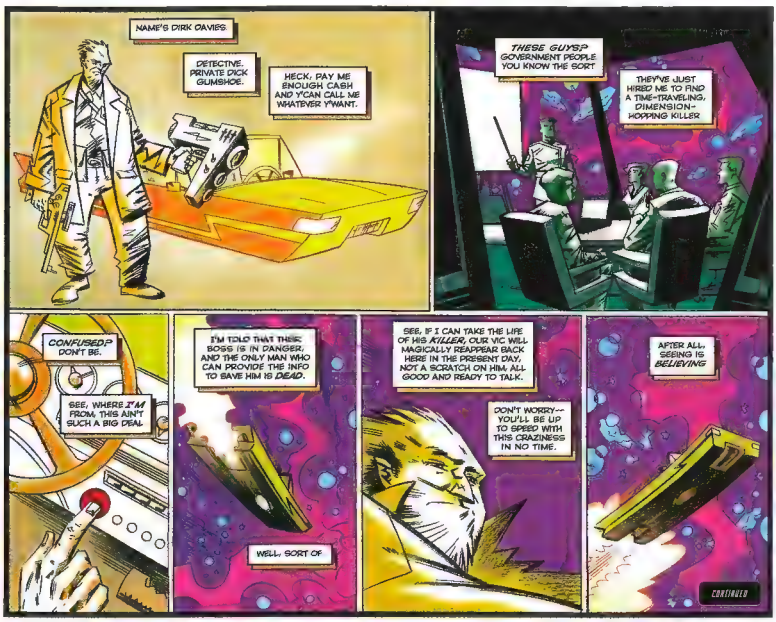
The comic industry has been looking for new funding models for quite some time. Advertising seems to have dropped off, customers are increasingly worried about skyrocketing prices, and piracy is on the rise.

So thank the Lord for ***ShiftyLook*** *(shiftylook.com)*, a new initiative within Japanese gaming giant Namco Bandai commissioning webcomics from deliciously wonderful creators and then putting them all online for free. How the hell?

Well, the comics are based on classic (euphemism for "unknown") video games that Japanese firm Namco Bandai want to revive for a modern audience. Some that made it to America and some, let's face it, that didn't. So rather than relaunch these classic franchises to people who have never heard of them, they are putting people's toes in the water with free webcomics based on the games. And rather than get jobbing nobodies to create the comics as a means to an end, they have hired some of the better comic book names to create whole new worlds.

So we've had *Choker's* Ben McCool and *Trip City's* Dean Haspiel bringing us the surreal thriller *The Five Dimensional Adventures of Dirk Davies* based on 1980s Japanese arcade game *Warp & Warp*. Don't remember that one. *Bravoman*, which I have actually heard of, thanks to the Wii, is a late eighties platform fighting game, translated into cartoony action by webcomic stars Matt Moylan and Dax Gordine. And there's plenty more.

But the newest entrants are *Wonder Momo: Battle Idol*, based on the eighties beat-em-up *Wonder Momo*, co-written by tokusatsu expert and super otaku Erik Ko and *Skullkickers* writer Jim Zubkavich, and drawn by fighting game mainstay Omar


NAME'S DIRK DAVIES.
DETECTIVE. PRIVATE DICK. GUMSHOE.
HECK. PAY ME ENOUGH CASH AND Y'CAN CALL ME WHATEVER Y'WANT.
THESE GUYS? GOVERNMENT PEOPLE YOU KNOW THE SORT.
THEY'VE JUST HIRED ME TO FIND A TIME-TRAVELING, DIMENSION-HOPPING KILLER.
CONFUSED? DON'T BE.
SEE, WHERE I'M FROM, THIS AIN'T SUCH A BIG DEAL.
I'M TOLD THAT THEIR BOSS IS IN DANGER, AND THE ONLY MAN WHO CAN PROVIDE THE INFO TO SAVE HIM IS DEAD.
WELL, SORT OF.
SEE, IF I CAN TAKE THE LIFE OF HIS KILLER, OUR VIC WILL MAGICALLY REAPPEAR BACK HERE IN THE PRESENT DAY, NOT A SCRATCH ON HIM. ALL GOOD AND READY TO TALK.
DON'T WORRY-- YOU'LL BE UP TO SPEED WITH THIS CRAZINESS IN NO TIME.
AFTER ALL, SEEING IS BELIEVING.
CONTINUED

Dogan. Zubkavich has been working at Udon Studios for years, but achieved superstar comics fame with his fantasy comedy series *Skullkickers*. Expect the movie any year now.

Then there's *Rapid Thunder*, based on the *Rolling Thunder* scrolling game which I most definitely do remember, and renamed to what Namco Bandai tells me are "strategic purposes." And Jimmy Palmiotti and Juan Santacruz have taken this simple narrative and turning it into a stunning sun soaked heist comic. Palmiotti is ex-creative partner of both Marvel chief Joe Quesada and DC publisher Dan DiDio, partly the inspiration for Banky in Chasing Amy, and best known now for his Jonah Hex work for DC and his varied hard edge creator owned comics for Image. *Queen Crab* is my favourite.

Just those last two comics show the vast range in comics and storytelling styles. From a mangaesque cartoony fighting game, to something that looks more like it's come from the publishing houses of France. You know, where they make proper comics.

And finally and perhaps most anticipated of all, ShiftyLook has the *Dig Dug* 30th anniversary uber-collaboration coming up with *Penny Arcade's* Mike and Jerry, *PVP's* Scott Kurtz, and even up-and-coming webcomics star J.N. Wiedle. With that range of talent it is easy to see that these guys get the web scene and understand little dudes that blow up monsters with pumping equipment. And now I want to go play the arcade game...

With horror, thriller, and bouncy wide eyed cartoons ShiftyLook has a more diverse range of comics than most publishers. And they are still all free. And because few people have that much of an emotional connection with the original games, if they've even heard of them, the creators are free to create something completely original. That seems to be exactly what they are doing.

More please.

NOTES FROM TOWN
CHICAGO, 1931
C'MON. C'MON...
NOTHING WORSE THAN AN UNTIMELY INFORMANT.
ESPECIALLY WHEN IT MEANS WAITING AROUND THIS PART OF TOWN.
LOOKS LIKE I'VE GOT COMPANY
PROBLEM IS: I DON'T THINK IT'S THE COMPANY I'M EXPECTING...
STILL CAN'T MAKE OUT WHO'S DECIDED TO JOIN ME...
...AND THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.
HUH?
OK. I GOTTA ADMIT. EVEN I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS ONE BEFORE...

LEN WEIN ON BEFORE WATCHMEN

By Gavin Lees

Len Wein, co-creator of *Swamp Thing* and *Wolverine*, editor of the original *Watchmen* series and current writer of the *Ozymandias* and *Crimson Corsair* comics talks *Before Watchmen*.

As both the editor of the original *Watchmen* series and a writer on *Before Watchmen*, Len Wein is in a unique position with the property and characters. I took the opportunity to speak to him at FanExpo Vancouver about his work with both series to find out what we can expect from his *Ozymandias* title, and his thoughts on DC's relationship with Alan Moore.

Gavin Lees: I wanted to start out by asking you what your plans were for Before Watchmen. I understand that you're writing the Ozymandias series.

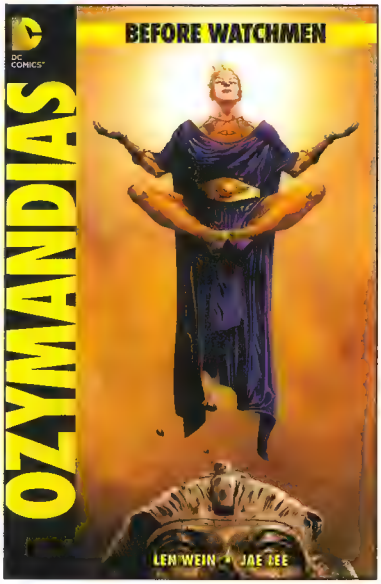
Len Wein: Yeah, I'm doing *Ozymandias* and *Curse of the Crimson Corsair*.

Ozymandias is one of the more fleshed-out characters in the original *Watchmen* – you get his entire history from birth until the climax of the book. How much of that were you relying on to fill in your version of the character?

I don't know exactly. I don't know how you'd measure that. There were moments; there were throwaway phrases that I took [from the original book] where I had filled out the whole scene. So, it sort of evolved organically, as any good story should.

You were the editor of the original series. Did you feel that you had a better handle on the characters than some of the other writers?

I think we're all working as hard as possible. I had also been – as near as I can recall – the only other guy that ever wrote the characters when I did the video game. So, I had already written Nite Owl and Rorschach, which is, of course, why I didn't get those characters to do. [Laughs] No, I have a handle on those characters and, amazingly – having read all the scripts – everybody has a handle on those characters!



One of the more intriguing aspects of Ozymandias is how his politics and philosophy are offset by the other members of the group. Are you giving him that same ideology, even though the others will be absent from the series?

I think I'm continuing the philosophies – you don't want to change the characters for the sake of change. You have to be faithful to the original concept, and I am doing my best to do that. His politics are a little odd; his morals are a little odd. I think that – for all that, I think Doctor Manhattan appears to be – Ozy is a far more amoral character. He does whatever he needs to do

to accomplish his ends and is extraordinarily patient about how long it takes him. "I don't care if it takes me 20 years, I will get what I want in the end."

One of the more powerful elements was that his mindset was very of-its-time in 1985. Do you still think that he's a relevant character, even though it's 2012, and we're being taken further back into Ozy's history?

If he were around today, he would be less relevant, but he's still in 1985. I'm treating him that way – he's living in that world. His needs, his morals, his philosophy are all formed by the world of his moment, and I don't feel that because we're 25 years – god, really, 25 years? – in the future, that he would change. We've changed, but he hasn't. He may be read differently now, because the audience is coming to it differently, but I think that the character is essentially the same guy.

So, what time frame are you using in the series – you said it's still in 1985?

Yes, this is the run-up to the original series. The last panel of the last issue is the first time you see him in the original book. And you have to think about that – when you *first* see him in the original book. That's the last panel.

Returning to the original series, and your role as editor – how much input did you have into what Alan Moore and Dave Gibbons were creating?

I have always believed that I do my job best as editor when it appears that I'm doing it least. That means: you hire the right people, you point them in the right direction, and then you get the hell out of their way. You only step in when they start to veer off course, if they do. Except for my argument – ongoing, as everyone knows – with Alan about the ending of the story, I let them do what they did. My biggest contribution was some of the design work and the concept of how we filled up the books – all those wonderful things that Alan wrote, with the chapters from *Under the Hood* and the articles about Ozy and Doctor Manhattan – those were my suggestions. Not specifically, "do this," but, "this is the sort of thing we need to do to fill up the space."

Did your editorial role have any impact on the genesis of Before Watchmen? Was this something that you wanted to do?

I was asked if I wanted to be one of the writers and I jumped at it. The editorial role is held by different people this time, but fortunately they have been much like I am as editors – they pointed us in the right direction and got the hell out of our way. All the writers are working pretty autonomously – the editors are there, just in case – but we're doing what we wanna do.

How much collaboration have you done with the other writers on the project? Are you trying to keep the cohesiveness of the original, where all the stories – including the pirate comic – intertwine?

There's a little bit of that. It's constructed in such a way that the *Crimson Corsair* is a difficult book to write because, unlike the *Black Freighter* which flowed in and out as it needed to – four pages here, nothing in the next issue. This is being produced so that there are two pages in every one of the books which, I didn't realize when I started this whole thing, forced me to come up with 35 cliffhangers! [Laughs] But it's been working pretty well.

Is there going to be any other interaction between the titles?

There are scenes seen from points of view in different books. We get to see the same scene from this character's point of view, and then from that character's point of view. Sometimes you realize they're having two entirely different conversations, but the whole thing is surprisingly cohesive.

Now, Jae Lee who you're working with on Ozymandias, has a very different art style to Dave Gibbons.

Yes! The job has surpassed everything he's ever done. The book is like fine art. It's very Frank Frazetta – it's amazing!

Did that have an impact on the way you write the book?

Yes! I always prefer dialogue to come off the pencils, because it allows for any mistakes that the artist may have made. Jae's work is so designed – it's amazingly designed – that it's been an effort just sometimes to place balloons properly. There's less copy in spots than I might have preferred, but there's copy where it needs to be. It's an interesting experience, because the stuff I'm doing with John Higgins – who coloured

the original book – his artwork, the pirate artwork is wonderful and much cleaner. I'm blowing through that – everything works easily. Every job is very different, every series is very different. In the end though, it's all part of one great cohesive story.

Is Higgins doing Crimson Corsair in the style of an old EC story?

Yes! It's amazing. We spent a lot of time talking about the colouring on it, so it's going to be very distinct.

There's a huge elephant in the room any time we talk about *Before Watchmen*, which is Alan Moore's resistance to the project. When he originally signed his contract – which is the main point of contention – did you, as the editor, have any oversight of that? Did you know what he was signing?

No, I was not involved with the business end of it at all – I never am. Alan's putting forth that somehow DC had this plan to betray him, which is madness. The only reason a book stays in print is because a book keeps selling. Alan and Dave did a book that was so good that it has always kept selling. It's never been out of print, not so they could keep it and not give it back, but because it's been making him money – *him* money. I would happily trade his income off Watchmen for the last 25 years for the majority of my income for the last 25 years. I'm aware of how much money he makes every year on this project that he despises and has done terrible things to him, and that he wants back so that he can sell it somewhere else, where it won't make as much money? I don't understand the logic.

I think his perspective is that he doesn't want anyone from DC making money from his creation, because of the way they've treated him.

But they aren't his creations! They're the Charlton heroes turned sideways, at his editor's behest, because as Dick Giordano – God rest him – said, "I just paid a lot of money for these characters. I don't want you to kill them off in the first story!"[Laughs]

But there were also people at DC protecting the property, right? My understanding was that Paul Levitz understood Alan's wishes and stopped anything more being done with Watchmen. But now that he's no longer president, the floodgates opened.

Yes. Basically, Paul didn't want to upset Alan, although I know that he was frustrated with Alan because he's sitting there going, "He's sits there badmouthing us, and I'm writing these cheques every year that would choke a horse! And he's complaining?!?" Dan DiDio's attitude is that they're a business and when you have a viable property that you can make money off of, you should use it. People ask me what *Before Watchmen*

is going to do to *Watchmen*, the answer is absolutely nothing. That book is on the shelf, just as Alan and Dave did it – it's never gonna change. We're not gonna go back and re-write bits of it, or stick new things in the middle of the book. These are separate stories, told about characters that evolve from DC characters, not from Alan's mind entirely – which is 99% of what Alan has done over the years. He will alter someone else's character.

Including yours.

Yes, exactly! He rides a high horse he ought not to be on. I had made some passing comment about how, if I had felt the same way about *Swamp Thing* as what he feels about *Watchmen*, he might not have the career he has today.

But, looking at the *Swamp Thing* movies, or the last *Wolverine* movie and what was done with your characters, can you maybe sympathise with him a little?

No! Everything is what it is. I've written in every medium – novels, films, animated series, comic books, video games – and I approach every single one of them as exactly the medium I'm working in. I don't look at how my work was transformed from one medium to another and go, "That was terrible!" That was just the movie – you work to the medium you're working in. I feel that it's important – yet again, even if the movies are terrible, my books are on the shelves just the way I wrote them.

"Len's right that he tends to hire talent and get out of their way, making suggestions when necessary. It became apparent something had to fill the remainder of the comic's pages so his editorial content ideas were terrific. He managed to convince Paul Levitz to forgo ad revenue for a hot selling title in favor of an editorial package that would feel unique.

"On the other hand, a good editor is also an advocate for the talent and in this case, I don't know how much attention he paid to Alan and Dave's ideas for the marketing for the series. The guys had strong ideas and designs as early as the beginning of 1985 and I saw none of it employed by the marketing department, which I know was a sore point for Alan and Dave. After the work Len and Dave did on *Green Lantern* proved ill-fated, I would have hoped Len would have paid more attention to their desires to make it up to Dave."

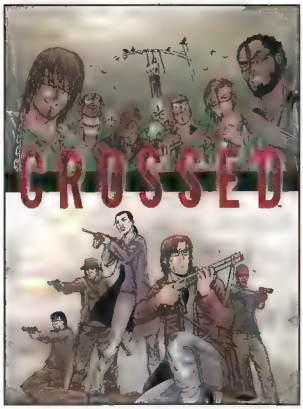
—Bob Greenberger, editor at DC Comics at the time.

http://bcool.bz/bcm0-crossed

CROSSED: MEET THE SURVIVORS

By Keith Davidsen

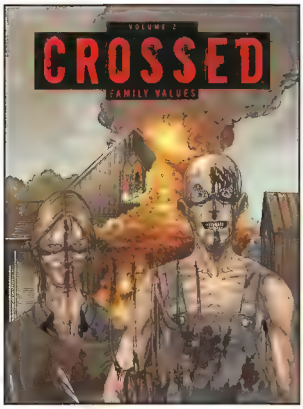
In *Crossed*, Garth Ennis created the ultimate apocalyptic scenario: a disease that tears through human civilization in an instant, turning its infected victims into sadistic thrill-killers. Called "Crossed" due to the shape of the rash that mars their faces, these lunatics are relentless, wholly devoid of regret or mercy. Who could stand up to such fiends, and where were they when the world came to an end? We're going to take a look at the survivors of the Crossed world, now spanning three collected volumes, a 3D graphic novel, a new ongoing series, and an online webcomic! Enter the world of the Crossed if you dare, but remember: *There is no hope. There are no heroes. No one is coming to save you.*



STAN, The Everyman

Narrator of *Crossed Volume 1*

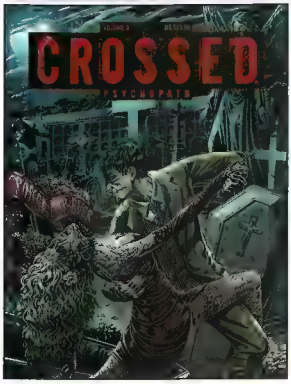
Jim Junior's Diner was just an ordinary pit stop in the heart of rural America, a place where likable hero Stan became a regular after running out of cash on a cross-country trek. Ordinary, that is, until the day that Stan watched as a grinning Crossed walked in carrying a bloody spinal column, lunged over the counter, and ripped off Jim Junior's nose with his teeth. In just minutes, the world as he knew it was gone – with police cars blowing up, planes crashing, and a nuclear facility erupting all within his line of sight. If it wasn't for tough-as-nails Cindy, a mother on the run with her little boy Patrick, Stan never would have lived through the day, let alone the next few years traversing the American wasteland...



ADALINE PRATT, The Rebellious Daughter

Narrator of *Crossed 2: Family Values*

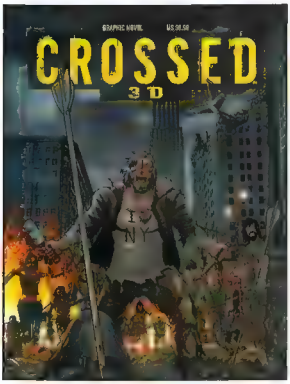
For generations, the Pratts have raised horses in Lincolnton, North Carolina, a tight-knit, God-fearing family guided by righteous patriarch Joe. But the Pratts have a deep, dark secret. Addy, eighteen years old, has seen enough of her father's sexual abuse towards her siblings, and finally stands up to him. No sooner does he beat her down than a veritable army of Crossed charge from the wilderness, overtaking the ranch. While the Pratts lose some beloved family in the melee, they bond together under Joe's stern leadership. Addy knows her father is a wicked man, but in a world overrun by evil, he may be their only hope for survival... until the day she can stand her ground once more.



HAROLD LORRE, The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Narrator of *Crossed 3: Psychopath*

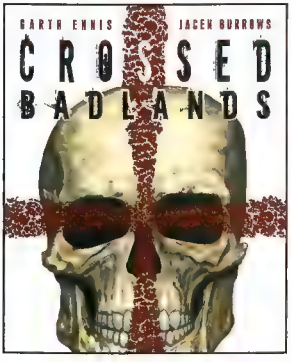
Madmen stalked humanity long before the Crossed outbreak. For Harold Lorre, the fearsome new world reflected of his own perverse impulses, although he had far more cunning than the carefree Crossed. In his old life, Harold was a party store clerk who hosted kids' parties as a clown, a divorced father with an unhealthy obsession for Lori, a beautiful customer. When the world ended, Harold rescued and took advantage of the shell-shocked woman as their families were killed off, but lost her to Crossed marauders soon afterward. Falling in with unsuspecting survivors, Harold manipulates the group to his own ends, preying on them as he steers them towards a confrontation with Lori's killers.



JAKE, The Gun-Toting Pacifist

Narrator of *Crossed 3D*

Jake had devoted his life to peace. He hadn't been in a fight since kindergarten and had hoped to enter the seminary before the plague hit. But if violence had no place in the world before, it was the exact opposite now! Upon discovering that skilled physician Dr. Denise Tang had returned to the overrun wasteland of New York City to find medicine for sick children – and become trapped – Jake joins Lt. Hunt MacAvoy's Handymen, a ragtag group of would-be soldiers intent on infiltrating the conquered city and extracting the world's last doctor. When confronted with the suicide mission through a million Crossed murderers, Jake and Handymen picked up their guns and said, "Why not?"



IAN, The Heartbroken

Narrator of *Crossed: Badlands #1-3*

In his words, Ian had "known the love of a woman who was wholly good…" and though he planned to live as long as he could, the only hint of happiness left for him was the thought of seeing her again in a next life. Ian and Penny holed up in an attic in Glasgow for a week before trying to sneak out of the city, daring a deadly stretch of highway where grinning Crossed and panicked survivors were engaged in an impromptu demolition derby. Penny was the victim of the most outrageous drive-by imaginable, leaving Ian to plod on alongside a small band of survivors in the Scottish Highlands, including a mangled soldier claiming to be Prince Harry.

And finally, welcome to the latest *Crossed* epic, ***Crossed: Wish You Were Here***. The story is written by Simon Spurrier with artwork by Javier Barreno, and published in free installments **every Thursday at *www.CrossedComic.com***. Si's written an exclusive look at the hero of his own piece, smack dab in the midst of London's downfall.

SHAKY, The Writer

Narrator of *Crossed: Wish You Were Here*

"The Crossed pandemic swept through London like a lightsaber through slug meat. Out in the countryside, people might have stood a chance: to run, to hide, to never look back. But in the city? Penned in, seething with visitors and vendors, tourists and tarts…?

"Imagine it. The Trafalgar Square fountains running with blood… the Soho streets, previously the haunt of trendy haircuts and media-monkeys, now swarming with sadists. A plane strikes the London Eye like an angry angel and cleaves it in two; red buses rampage like mobile abattoirs; fires gnash at the famous skyline and, above it all, the endless sound of laughter. Cruel, childlike, vicious…

"Imagine the city transformed, a labyrinth plucked from the heart of Hell, and you'll understand that the odds of anyone getting out alive and uninfected would be a million to one. And then recall that London has – or rather had – a population of seven million. Which means that a handful of people… a handful of impossibly-lucky guys, by the law of averages alone, might just have made it…

"Shaky is one of them. Winner of the most important lottery in the world: ejected from a maelstrom of close-shaves and crippling traumas that took him from a quiet Soho café to the bloody banks of the Thames Barrier seven miles downriver. Born again into a changed world, tasked with finding a new reason to live. A new sanctuary. And, when he gets there, to wonder What The Hell comes next…"

The *Wish You Were Here* webcomic, along with the bi-weekly *Crossed: Badlands* comic book series, will continue to introduce new survivors in a world gone mad. If you're a fan of extreme horror, *Crossed* is your ultimate destination. Wish you were here, indeed!

BLEEDING COOL DIRECTORY
Retailer List

When Bleeding Cool Magazine first announced the return of comic-fan-focused editorial and news to the magazine format, the internet was abuzz with feedback. The response was strong from readers and retailers alike and we heard them loud and clear. On behalf of all of us all at Bleeding Cool, we would like to thank the following comic retailers for their profound support of this #0 launch issue. Thank you for helping us reach fans in your stores! We are looking forward getting your input to help make this magazine a must have for all comic book collectors.

United States and Territories

- Michael Andrew Holmes: Tuscaloosa, AL
- Jesse James Comics & Collectib: Glendale, AZ
- Samurai Comics Inc: Phoenix, AZ
- Spazdog Comics: Phoenix, AZ
- Fantasy Comics: Tucson, AZ
- Kapow! Comics: Sherwood, AR
- Cornerstorecomics: Anaheim, CA
- Phat Collectibles Inc: Anaheim, CA
- Metropolis Comics: Bellflower, CA
- Dark Carnival: Berkeley, CA
- Crush Comics & Cards: Castro Valley, CA
- Bat Comics: Chico, CA
- Collectors Ink: Chico, CA
- Comic Madness: Chino, CA
- Flying Colors Comics And Other: Concord, CA
- Super Heroes In Training: Escondido, CA
- Treasure Island Comics: Fremont, CA
- Heroes Comics & Cards: Fresno, CA
- I.E. Comics And Games: Hemet, CA
- The Comic Bug: Manhattan Beach, CA
- Bonanza Books & Comics: Modesto, CA
- Lee's Comics I: Mountain View, CA
- Dr Comics & Mr Games: Oakland, CA
- Comic Odyssey: Pasadena, CA
- Comics Factory: Pasadena, CA
- 4 Color Fantasies: Rancho Cucamong, CA
- A-1 Comics I: Sacramento, CA
- Big Brother Comics: Sacramento, CA
- Comics & Collectibles: Sacramento, CA
- Villainous Lair Comics Llc: San Deigo, CA
- Adam Cholak Comics: San Diego, CA
- Comickaze: San Diego, CA
- Leef Michael Smith: San Francisco, CA
- Whatever Store Inc: San Francisco, CA
- Jay Comic Comany, Inc: San Marcos, CA
- Atlantis Fantasyworld: Santa Cruz, CA
- Earth-2 Comics Inc: Sherman Oaks, CA
- Freedman's Comic Smash: Studio City, CA
- John Harter: Suisun, CA
- Comics Conspiracy: Sunnyvale, CA
- Wanted Comix: Torrance, CA
- Comics Toons 'n' Toys: Tustin, CA
- Hypnocomics.Com: Ventura, CA
- Comics Unlimited #2: Westminster, CA
- Collector's Paradise: Winnetka, CA
- Time Warp Inc: Boulder, CO
- Ed's Cards & Comics: Colorado Spring, CO
- Mile High Comics: Denver, CO
- Halley's Comics: Ft Collins, CO
- Amazing Fantasy Comics: Littleton, CO
- Rogue Comics: Bridgeport, CT
- Omni Books, Inc: East Hartford, CT
- Buried Under Comics: Manchester, CT
- Legends Of Superhero's: Middlebury, CT
- Richie's Comic Cabana: Waterbury, CT
- The Comic Book Shop: Wilmington, DE
- The Comics Club Inc: Brandon, FL
- Docking Bay 94: Coconut Creek, FL
- Man Of Action Figures: Cutler Bay, FL
- Acme II: Longwood, FL
- Phil's Comic Shoppe: Margate, FL
- Macs Comics & Collectibles Inc: Miami, FL
- Comic Connection: Orlando, FL
- Tyson Schneider, Inc.: Oviedo, FL
- Heroes And Hotshots Llc: Tampa, FL
- Famous Faces & Funnies: West Melbourne, FL
- P.P.F. Comics Inc: West Palm Beach, FL
- A COMIC SHOP *A Comic Shop Winter Park, FL*
- Oxford Comics Inc: Atlanta, GA
- Titan Books & Comics Inc: Duluth, GA
- Dr. No's: Marietta, GA
- Bunjee's Books & Comics: Mcdonough, GA
- Heroes: Newnan, GA
- Dreamland Comics Iv: Bartlett, IL
- Amazing Fantasy Comic Shop: Calumet City, IL
- Alley Cat Comics: Chicago, IL
- Darktower Comics: Chicago, IL
- Evil Squirrel Comics: Chicago, IL
- First Aid Comics: Chicago, IL
- G-Mart: Chicago, IL
- The Comix Revolution Inc: Evanston, IL
- Alternate Realities: Galesburg, IL
- Graham Cracker: Naperville, IL
- Tenth Planet: Oaklawn, IL
- Keiths Komix: Schaumburg, IL
- Comic Service: Springfield, IL
- Vintage Phoenix Inc.: Bloomington, IN
- Discount Comic Book Service: Fort Wayne, IN
- Creative Comics: Griffith, IN
- Comic Book University: Indianapolis, IN
- Comic Carnival Dba Comic Dist: Indianapolis, IN
- Comics Cubed: Kokomo, IN
- Buy Me Toys.Com: Mishawaka, IN

- Mayhem Collectibles: Ames, IO
- The Core: Cedar Falls, IO
- Cup o' Kryptonite: Des Moines, IO
- Acme Comics And Collectibles: Sioux City, IO
- Pop Culture Comix: Overland Park, KS
- Prairie Dog Comics: Wichita, KS
- Action Verse Entertainment: Louisville, KT
- The Great Escape: Louisville, KT
- Arcadian Comics & Games Llc.: Newport, KT
- Comic Vault: Radcliff, KT
- Gonzo Comics: Metairie, LA
- Gothic Ltd: Metairie, LA
- Crescent City Comics: New Orleans, LA
- Casablanca Comics: Windham, ME
- *Third Eye Comics*
  Annapolis, MD
- Alliance Comics: Baltimore, MD
- Amazing Spiral: Baltimore, MD
- Collectors Corner: Parkville, MD
- Cards, Comics And Collectibles: Reisterstown, MD
- Alternate Worlds: Sykesville, MD
- Gotham Comics: Westminster, MD
- *HeavyInk.com*
  Arlington, MA
- Friendly Neighborhood Comics: Bellingham, MA
- Comicopia: Boston, MA
- *Newbury Comics, Inc.*
  Brighton, MA
- Larry's Comics: Lowell, MA
- Modern Myths: Northampton, MA
- New England Comics: Norwood, MA
- Harrison's Comics &: Salem, MA
- Comicazi: Sommerville, MA
- Bob's Hobbies & Collectibles: Springfield, MA
- That's Entertainment: Worcester, MA
- Big Bens Comix: Allen Park, MI
- JRS Enterprises Inc: Canton, MI
- Warp 9: Clawson, MI
- Green Brain Comics: Dearborn, MI
- Tardys CC Inc: Grand Rapids, MI
- Collectors Corner - Midland: Midland, MI
- Wonderworld Comics & Games: Taylor, MI
- Top Of The Ninth: Traverse City, MI
- TJ's Cards & Comics: Warren, MI
- Goldmine Comics & Cards: Wyoming, MI
- Twin City Comics: Columbia Height, MN
- 30th Century Inc: Eagan, MN
- Big Brain Comics: Minneapolis, MN
- Comic Book Adventure: Minneapolis, MN
- Dreamers Cards & Games: Minneapolis, MN
- Rock Bottom Books: Columbia, MT
- Book Barn T/A: Vintage Stock: Joplin, MT
- Clints Books Comics & Games: Kansas City, MT
- Pulp Fiction Comics & Games: Lees Summit, MT
- Newcastle Comics & Games: Maryland Hgts, MT
- Fantasy Shop Inc: St Charles, MT
- Star Clipper: St Louis, MT
- Mail Order Comics Inc: Gretna, NE
- Krypton Comics: Omaha, NE
- Legend Comics: Omaha, NE
- Hellpop: Henderson, NV
- Alternate Reality Comics: Las Vegas, NV
- Comic Oasis Inc: Las Vegas, NV
- Cosmic Comics: Las Vegas, NV
- Velvet Underground Comics: Las Vegas, NV
- Double Midnight Comics &: Manchester, NH
- The Comic Store: Nashua, NH
- Chris Blewitt: Bayville, NJ
- Joker's Child: Fairlawn, NJ
- The Comic Station Llc: Haddon Heights, NJ
- Traders Of Babylon: Hoboken, NJ
- Funny Books, Comics & Stuff: Lake Hiawatha, NJ
- New World Manga: Livingston, NJ
- A & S Comics: North Bergen, NJ
- Comics Plus: Oakhurst, NJ
- Little Shop Of Comics & Cards: Scotch Plains, NJ
- Amazing Stories: Shrewsbury, NJ
- Frankenstein Comics: Woodbury, NJ
- Mpsl, Inc: Albuquerque, NM
- Big Adventure Comics: Santa Fe, NM
- Earthworld Comics: Albany, NY
- Magnum Comics: Bronx, NY
- Heroes Your Mom Threw Out: Elmira Heights, NY
- Two Kings Comics Llc: Farmington, NY
- Collector's Kingdom: Huntington Stat, NY
- Baileys Of Lindenhurst: Lindenhurst, NY
- Blu Planet Entertainment: Massapequa, NY
- Main Street Comics: Middletown, NY
- The Comix Zone: N. Syracuse, NY
- Best Comics Distribution Ctr: New Hyde Park, NY
- Forbidden Planet: New York, NY
- Jim Hanley's Universe: New York, NY
- *Midtown Comics*
  New York, NY
- Argosy Games Inc: Poughkeepsie, NY
- All Heroes: Rochester, NY
- Dokoto Corp: Scarsdale, NY
- Fourth World Comics: Smithtown, NY
- Darrin S. Williams: Asheville, NC
- Pastimes: Asheville, NC
- Heroes Aren't Hard To Find, Inc: Charlotte, NC
- *Ultimate Comics*
  Durham, NC
- Heroes Are Here: Goldsboro, NC
- Classic Comics, Llc: Lewisville, NC
- Players Choice: Whiteville, NC
- Ssalefish Comics: Winston Salem, NC

- Clem's Collectibles: Antwerp, OH
- Csmc: Cincinnati, OH
- Maverick's S/C & Comics: Cincinnati, OH
- Queen City Comic & Card Co: Cincinnati, OH
- Rockin' Rooster: Cincinnati, OH
- Suds Media: Cleveland, OH
- JC Comics & Cards: Cuyahoga Falls, OH
- Bell Book & Comic Ltd: Dayton, OH
- Rupps Comics: Fremont, OH
- A And A Comics Inc: Garfield Hts, OH
- Alter Ego Comics: Lima, OH
- Capital City Comics: Reynoldsburg, OH
- All American Cards & Comics: Warren, OH
- Super-fly Comics & Games: Yellow Springs, OH
- Mammoth Comics: Tulsa, OK
- Cosmic Monkey Comics Inc: Portland, OR
- Excalibur Books And Comics #1: Portland, OR
- Other Worlds Llc: Portland, OR
- Big Bang Comics & Collectibles: Coraopolis, PA
- New Dimension Comics: Cranberry Twnsp, PA
- Cyborg One Inc: Doylestown, PA
- The Cool Stuff Partnership: Drexel Hill, PA
- Comic Collection: Feasterville, PA
- Joys Japanimation: Greensburg, PA
- Bent Wookee Comix: Johnstown, PA
- The Comic Store: Lancaster, PA
- Pittsburgh Comics: McMurray, PA
- There It Is Inc: Monroeville, PA
- Eide's Entertainment Ent Inc: Pittsburgh, PA
- Golden Eagle Comics: Reading, PA
- Joseph C. Figured, Jr: Williamsport, PA
- Comix Megazone: Camuy, PR
- Metro Comics Inc: Guaynabo, PR
- Ry Enterprises Inc: Cranston, RI
- Planet Comics: Anderson, SC
- Dave's Comics & Cards: Fort Mill, SC
- Robert Young: Greenville, SC
- Apocalypse Comics: N Myrtle Beach, SC
- Soundwave Music & Movies: Summerville, SC
- Dewayne's World Comics & Games: Kingsport, TN
- Comics Exchange: Knoxville, TN
- Lone Star: Arlington, TX
- Dragons Lair Comics & Fantasy: Austin, TX
- Keith's Comics: Dallas, TX
- Bedrock City Comic Co: Houston, TX
- R & R Comics: Houston, TX
- Star Books & Comics: Lubbock, TX
- Ground Zero: Tyler, TX
- Retail Business Solutions Inc: Universal City, TX
- Bankstons: Waco, TX
- Black Cat Comics Inc: Salt Lake, UT
- Comics & Gaming Outpost Inc: Gainesville, VA
- Comic Toast: Harrisonburg, VA
- G2k Games Inc: Norton, VA
- Untamed Worlds: Rustburg, VA
- Phoenix Comics & Toys: Sterling, VA
- Four Color Fantasies: Winchester, VA
- Action City: Federal Way, WA
- Infinite Frontiers: Kennewick, WA
- Docking Bay 93: Mt Vernon, WA
- Comic Hut: Renton, WA
- I Like Comics: Vancouver, WA
- Comic World: Huntington, WV
- Gary's Comics And More: Morgantown, WV
- Ak Comics: Beloit, WI
- Capital City Comics: Madison, WI
- The Westfield Company: Middleton, WI
- Collectors Edge: Milwaukee, WI
- House Of Heroes Comics Inc: Oshkosh, WI

Canada

- Alpha Comics: Calgary, AB
- Another Dimension I: Calgary, AB
- Imaginary Wars Gaming &: Calgary, AB
- Redd Skull Comics & Cd's: Calgary, AB
- Happy Harbor Ltd: Edmonton, AB
- Amazing Fantasy Comics & Books: Red Deer, AB
- Rx Comics: Vancouver, BC
- Legends: Victoria, BC
- Comics America: Winnipeg, MB
- Galaxy Comics & Collectables: Winnipeg, MB
- Crossman/Dewolfe Retail: Halifax, NS
- Strange Adventures: Halifax, NS
- Comic Book Connection: Brampton, ON
- Fantasy Realm: Cornwall, ON
- Burdin's Comics: Hamilton, ON
- Lookin For Heroes: Kitchener, ON
- B.A.'s Comics & Nostalgia: London, ON
- Comic Book Collector: London, ON
- Heroes Cards & Comics: London, ON
- Gotham Central Comics: Mississauga, ON
- Comix Plus: Thunder Bay, ON
- Red Nails II: Toronto, ON
- The Beguiling: Toronto, ON
- Toronto Cartoonists Workshop I: Toronto, ON
- Carry On Comics & Books: Waterloo, ON
- Carsley Whetstone & Company, Inc: Monteal, QC
- Blind Ferret Entertainment Inc: Montreal, QC
- Librairie Millenium: Montreal, QC
- Distribution Universe: St Laurent, QC

International

- Collectors Corner: Wien, Austria
- Dees Book And Comic Shop: Canberra, Australia
- Peter John Moore: Gawler, Australia
- Garry Fay & Pauline Fay: Learmonth , Australia
- Comics 'R' Us: Melbourne, Australia
- Kings Corporation: Sydney South, Australia
- T3 Terminal Entertainment: Frankfurt, Germany
- Hade Gmbh: Osnabruck, Germany
- Comics And Vegetables: Tel-Aviv, Israel
- Italycomics: Roma, Italy
- Readers Den: Claremont, South Africa

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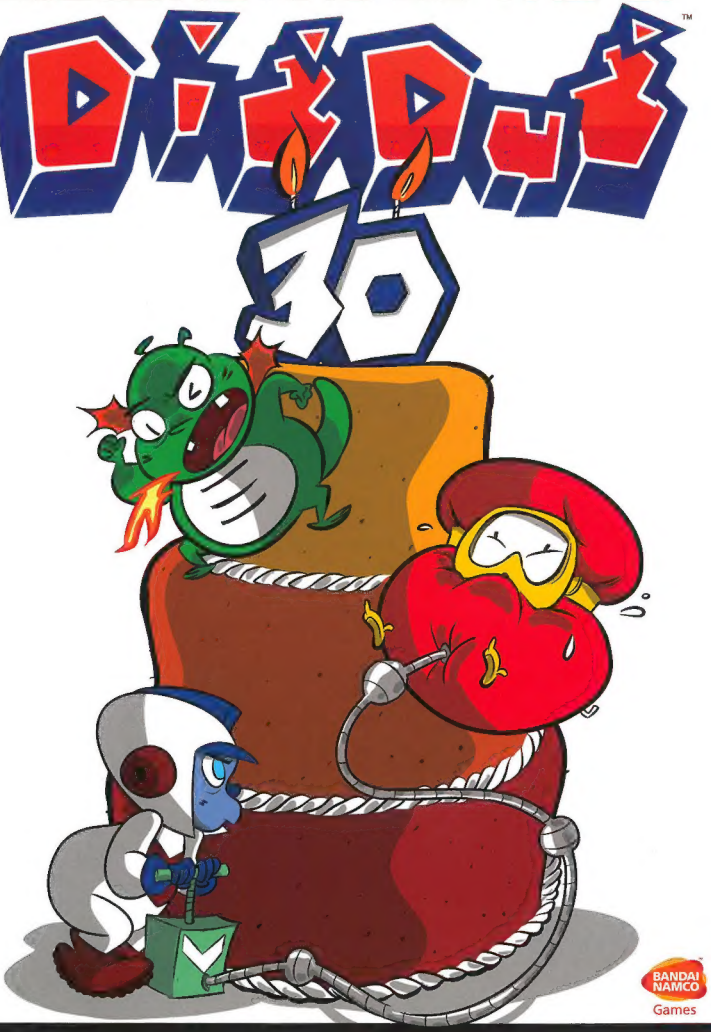

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